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Message Text

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AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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SUBJECT: 31ST UNGA - WESTERN SAMOA'S SPEECH ON ADMISSION
TO THE UN, DECEMBER 15, 1976

REF: USUN 6194

TEXT OF SPEECH BY H.E. TUPUA TAMASESE LEALOFI IV, DEPUTY HEAD OF STATE OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF WESTERN SAMOA ON THE OCCASION OF SAMOA'S ADMISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS, DECEMBER 15, 1976 FOLLOWS (TUPUA TAMASESE SPOKE IN SAMOAN; ENGLISH TEXT BELOW WAS FURNISHED BY HIS DELEGATION, UN DOCUMENT A/31/PV.100):

QUOTE WESTERN SAMOA WAS RECOGNIZED AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE BY THIS ORGANIZATION 15 YEARS AGO. ON 1 JANUARY 1962 UNDER THE EYES OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL THE TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENT WITH NEW ZEALAND WAS ENDED. BEFORE COMING UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF NEW ZEALAND, WE HAD BEEN ADMINISTERED AS A COLONY BY EUROPEAN NATIONS.

IN THE SPAN OF OUR HISTORY THE COLONIAL PERIOD WAS A SHORT INTERLUDE, AND NOT AN ALTOGETHER UNHAPPY ONE. THE WORLD
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SAID WE WERE INDEPENDENT IN 1962. BUT WE HAD BEEN RUNNING OUR OWN AFFAIRS AND HAD OUR OWN IDENTITY BEFORE THE EUROPEANS FOUND US. THE THINGS WHICH MOST AFFECT THE LIVES OF THE SAMOAN PEOPLE WERE MUCH THE SAME THEN AS THEY ARE NOW. THE THINGS WHICH WERE IMPORTANT TO US THEN ARE STILL IMPORTANT.

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IN POLYNESIA WE SENSE THE NATURAL TIMING OF THE EARTH;
THE TIDE EBBS AND FLOWS; THE SUN RISES AND SETS. PEOPLE
ARE BORN, LIVE, AND DIE.

OURS IS A SMALL COUNTRY. WE ARE SEPARATED FROM OUR NEIGHBOURS
BY HUNDREDS OF MILES OF SEA. WE LIVE MAINLY BY WHAT WE
PRODUCE FROM THE LAND AND REAP FROM THE SEA. WE DEPEND ON
THE RESOURCES AROUND US. NOT ONLY ARE WE AN INDEPENDNET
STATE; WE ARE AN INDEPENDENT PEOPLE. WE ARE PROUD OF OUR
IDENTITY, OUR HISTORY, OUR LANGUAGE, OUR CULTURE AND OUR
TRADITIONS.

WE DID NOT JOINT THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1962, WHEN THE WORLD
ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WE WERE INDEPENDENT. WE STOOD BACK AND
WAITED. WE WERE BUSY AT HOME PUTTING OUR HOUSE BACK IN
ORDER, REARRANGING SOME OF THE FURNITURE, PUTTING SOME OF
THE OLD FAMILIAR THINGS BACK WHERE THEY BELONGED. THAT
GAVE US BREATHING SPACE, TIME TO STAND BACK AND TAKE STOCK
OF THE WORLD.

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS NO DOUBT ALL LOOK ALIKE FROM THE
CAPITALS OF EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA. TO THOSE OF US WHO
LIVE THERE THEY ARE NOT. SOME OF THE THINGS WHICH ARE MOST
PRECIOUS TO US ARE THE THINGS WHICH MAKE US DIFFERENT FROM
OUR NEAREST NEIGHBOURS. A PACIFIC ISLAND IS A FRAGILE THING.
WE HAD BEEN TOUCHED BY AN ALIEN WORLD. THAT TOUCH HAD LEFT
ITS MARK. WE NEEDED TIME TO RECOVER, TO LOOK AT THE WORLD,
TO DECIDE FOR OURSELVES HOW CLOSE TO IT WE COULD AFFORD
TO COME AND STILL RETAIN OUR WAY OF LIFE AND THE THINGS
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IMPORTANT TO US.

NOW WE BELIEVE WE KNOW WHERE WE ARE GOING. THE PACE OF
INTERNATIONAL EVENTS IS SUCH THAT THE PACIFIC WILL NOT
REMAIN, A QUIET BACKWATER MUCH LONGER. MANY COUNTRIES,
INCLUDING THE OLD COLONIAL POWERS, HAVE REDISCOVERED A
FORGOTTEN INTEREST IN THE REGION. THERE IS ALREADY EVIDENCE
OF GREAT-POWER INTEREST -- EVEN RIVALRY. THE INFLUENCES OF
THE CASH ECONOMY HAVE HAD THEIR INEVITABLE EFFECT. THE
EXPECTATIONS OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE CHANGED WITH EDUCATION AND
CONTACT WITH THE WORLD. WE OURSELVES FEEL BETTER ABLE TO MOVE
AND SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
OF NATIONS.

WE KNOW THAT IN TODAY'S WORLD WE NEED FRIENDS. OUR OLD FRIENDS
HAVE STOOD BY US OVER THE YEARS. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR HELP,
AND PATIENCE, WITH GRATITUDE. IN TOMORROW'S WORLD WE WILL
NEED NEW FRIENDS. WE UNDERSTAND WELL THE CONCEPT OF THE

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INTERDEPENDENT WORLD. WE KNOW THAT JUST OVER THE HORIZON
THERE ARE CHALLENGES WHICH WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MEET ALONE.

FOR THOSE REASONS WE HAVE JOINED THE UNITED NATIONS.

WE KNOW THAT OUR COUNTRY IS SMALL AND WILL NOT GREATLY
CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY. YET WE WISH TO SPEAK WITH
OUR OWN VOICE. WE WISH TO EXPRESS OUR OPINIONS IN A PLACE
WHERE THEY MIGHT BE HEARD. WE HAVE RECEIVED HELP FROM MANY
UNITED NATIONS BODIES IN THE PAST. WE WOULD LIKE TO PLAY OUR
PART IN THE PARENT BODY IN GUIDING THEIR ACTIVITIES. OUR
SPECIAL INTEREST WILL BE TO MAKE THEM AWARE OF HOW LIGHTLY
AND THOUGHTFULLY AND CAREFULLY THEY MUST STEP IN A SMALL
ISLAND NATION IF THEY ARE TO DO THE GOOD THEY SEEK AND NOT
DO HARM INSTEAD.

WE WISH TO BUILD ON OLD FRIENDSHIPS AND TO MAKE NEW
FRIENDS. WE KNOW THAT IN THIS BODY WE WILL FIND MANY WITH
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A CLOSE COMMUNITY OF INTEREST.
CLOSEST AT HAND WE HAVE OUR NEIGHBOURS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC,
OLD AND TRUSTED FRIENDS: NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, FIJI AND
PAPUA NEW GUINEA. WE SHARE THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND WE ARE
EQUAL PARTNERS TOGETHER IN OUR REGIONAL BODY, THE
SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM.

WE SENSE THAT WE WILL FIND A CLOSE COMMUNITY OF INTEREST
WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SINCE WE SHARE WITH THEM THE
COMMON NEED FOR HELP IF THE GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR IS
EVER TO BE REMOVED.

WE KNOW THAT WE WILL FIND FRIENDS AMONG OTHER SMALL DEVELOPING
ISLAND COUNTRIES. WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S PROBLEMS WELL.
WE WILL JOIN OUR VOICE TO THEIRS AND TRY TO MAKE THE
WORLD LISTEN, AND BECOME AWARE OF OUR PROBLEMS.

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WITH THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WE SHARE A SPECIAL BOND. WE ARE ONE OF THEM. THE THINGS WE HAVE IN COMMON ARE NOT ENVIABLE, BUT THEY MUST BE FACED WITH COURAGE, AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF FRIENDS THE PROBLEMS WE FACE WILL NOT BE INSURMOUNTABLE.

TO ALL OTHER PEACE-LOVING COUNTRIES WE OFFER OUR FRIENDSHIP. IN QOYW, WHEN WE FIRST THOUGHT ABOUT JOINING THE UNITED NATIONS, WE SAW IT AS A BODY THAT WE PREOCCUPIED WITH KEEPING PEACE IN THE WORLD. ITS INTERESTS LAY IN EUROPE, ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA. IT WAS NOT MUCH INTERESTED IN THE CONCERNS THAT CONCERNED US. NOW IS PREDOMINANT INTERESTS CONCERN THE SURVIVAL OF MANKIND. WE BELIEVE THAT IS WHERE ITS CONCERN SHOULD BE. IN POLYNESIA THE CONDITION OF PEOPLE, PHYSICAL OR SPIRITUAL, IS THE QUESTION OF FIRST IMPORTANCE. UNTIL THIS PLANET CAN FEED ITS PEOPLE, CLOTHE THEM, EDUCATE THEM AND ALLOW THEM TO LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS.

I MAKE NO APOLOGY WHEN I SAY THAT OUR FIRST CONCERN IN THIS ORGA-NIZATION WILL BE THE BETTERMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE SAMOAN PEOPLE. WE HOPE ALSO TO PLAY AS FULL A PART AS WE ARE ABLE IN THIS BODY IN THE FUTURE. THE CONDITION OF PEOPLE
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WILL BE FOREMOST IN OUR MINDS. IT WILL GUIDE OUR POSITION ON DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS, NOT ONLY AS THEY AFFECT INDIVIDUALS BUT AS THEY AFFECT GROUPS, COUNTRIES AND RACES--RACES THAT SPAN COUNTRIES.

THE COMFORTING THING ABOUT HISTORY IS THAT IT DOES NOT STOP. THE DECISIONS THAT WERE MADE IN EUROPEAN CAPITALS IN THE LAST CNETURY TO DRAW LINES ON THE MAP AND CALL THEM POSSESSIONS ARE NOT STANDING THE TEST OF TIME.

THE PROCESS OF DECOLONIZATION HAS ALMOST WORKED ITSELF OUT IN AFRICA. THE OUTCOME IS INEVITABLE. ONLY THE MEANS IS DEBATABLE. THE 1970'S ARE THE DECADE OF DECOLONIZATION

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IN THE PACIFIC. THAT DECADE HAS PROGRESSED WELL. INDEPENDENCE AND FULL

SELF-GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED BY A NUMBER OF COUNNTRIES
WITH TRANQUILLITY THAT MUST BE ENVIED ELSEWHERE. THE PACIFIC
WAY, AS WE CALL IT, HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR DIFFICULT
SITUATIONS TO BE OVERCOME AND TROUBLE TO BE AVOIDED. BUT
DIFFICULT CASES REMAIN. PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY ARE DIFFICULT, BE-
CAUSE THE TERRITORIES ARE POOR AND ISOLATED, BECAUSE THEY ARE
SMOTHERED BY THE DOMINATION OF ANOTHER POWER, OR BECAUSE
THEY HAVE BEEN SPLIT BY CONFLICTING AIMS,
THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE IS STILL NOT CLEAR.

THE PEOPLE WHOSE SHORES ARE BATHED BY THE WATERS OF THE PACIFIC
ARE OUR BROTHERS. WE SHARE THEIR AMBITIONS. WE WILL SPEAK
IN THIS BODY WITH THEIR INTERESTS AT HEART. WE KNOW THAT
CHANGES ARE WANTED AND THAT CHANGE MUST COME.

SAMOA HAS JOINED THE UNITED NATIONS LATE IN THE SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY. WE HAVE NOT SHARED IN THE ASSEMBLY'S
WORK, BUT WE KNOW IT HAS BEEN WORTH WHILE. WE LOOK
FORWARD TO PARTICIPATING IN THE ASSEMBLY'S WORK NEW YEAR.

I WISH TO THANK ALL THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH SUPPORTED OUR
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APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION BY SPONSORING THE RESOLUTION. I
WISH TO THANK ALL MEMBERS FOR VOTING FOR IT. I HAVE
HEARD WITH HUMILITY THE WORDS SPOKEN ABOUT MY COUNTRY,
AND I OFFER THOSE WHO HAVE SPOKEN THE GRATITUDE OF THE PEOPLE
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN SAMOA.

OUR THANKS GO TO NEW ZEALAND, OUR GOOD FRINED WHICH
IN OUR ABSENCE MADE MOST OF THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS
HISTORIC DAY.

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK AND TO PUT
TO THIS WORLD BODY JUST SOME OF THE THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO
MY COUNTRY, SAMOA. END QUOTE
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